

Amendments to the Claims:

Please cancel claims 1-19 as presented in the underlying International Application No. PCT/DE2003/002200.

Please add new claims 20-39 as indicated in the listing of claims below.

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-19 (cancelled)

Claim 20 (new): An apparatus for humidifying a gas stream, comprising:

 a humidifier device including at least one membrane permeable to water vapor, wherein the gas stream and a humid gas stream flow through a humidifier device, the a gas stream and the humid gas stream being separated from one another by the at least one membrane; and
 at least one bypass line configured to route at least part of one of the gas stream and the humid gas stream so that it does not come into contact with the membrane.

Claim 21 (new): The apparatus as recited in claim 20, wherein the gas stream is an inlet gas stream for a fuel cell system and the humid gas stream includes an exhaust gas stream from the fuel cell system.

Claim 22 (new): The apparatus as recited in claim 20, wherein the at least one bypass line is configured to route a first portion of the gas stream and to combined again downstream of the bypass line with the gas stream that flows through the humidifier.

Claim 23 (new): The apparatus as recited in claim 20, wherein the at least one bypass line is configured to route a portion of the humid gas stream.

Claim 24 (new): The apparatus as recited in claim 21, wherein the fuel cell system includes a

fuel cell having a cathode space and wherein the gas stream is a feed air for the cathode space.

Claim 25 (new): The apparatus as recited in claim 21, wherein the humid gas stream contains at least a part of the exhaust gases from a fuel cell of the fuel cell system.

Claim 26 (new): The apparatus as recited in claim 21, wherein the at least one bypass line is integrated in the humidifier device.

Claim 27 (new): The apparatus as recited in claim 26, wherein the at least one bypass line is disposed within the humidifier device such that any condensate which collects flows out through the bypass line.

Claim 28 (new): The apparatus as recited in claim 26, further comprising a device for varying a volumetric flow through the at least one bypass line integrated in the humidifier device.

Claim 29 (new): The apparatus as recited in claim 28, wherein the device for varying the volumetric flow includes a valve plunger disposed at one of an inlet and an outlet opening of the bypass line, the valve plunger configured to vary a cross section of the bypass line depending on a distance to the inlet or outlet opening.

Claim 30 (new): The apparatus as recited in claim 28, wherein the device for varying the volumetric flow includes a variable diaphragm that varies a cross section of the bypass line depending on a position and opening diameter of the variable diameter.

Claim 31 (new): The apparatus as recited in claim 28, wherein the device for varying the volumetric flow includes of two discs rotatable relative to one another openings, the device varying a cross section of at least one of the bypass line a flow region to the membrane depending on an angle of rotation of the two disks relative to one another.

Claim 32 (new): The apparatus as recited in claim 28, further comprising a further humidifier device disposed downstream of the device, wherein the humid gas stream is routed into the

further humidifier device so as to humidify a further gas stream.

Claim 33 (new): The apparatus as recited in claim 32, wherein the further gas stream is a feed air passing into a gas generation device of the fuel cell system.

Claim 34 (new): A method for humidifying a gas stream, comprising:

flowing the gas stream through a humidifier having a membrane permeable to water vapor;

flowing a humid gas stream through the humidifier, the gas stream and the humid gas stream being separated by the membrane;

routing at least a portion of one of the gas stream and the humid gas stream using a bypass line so that it does not come into contact with the membrane; and

varying a quantity of the portion so as to set a predetermined dew point in the gas stream.

Claim 35 (new): The method as recited in claim 34, wherein a humidity of the humid gas stream is reduced in the humidifier.

Claim 36 (new): The method as recited in claim 34, wherein the gas stream and the humid gas stream are in a fuel cell system.

Claim 37 (new): The method as recited in claim 36, wherein the fuel cell system generates electrical energy generator in a land, water or air vehicle.

Claim 38 (new): The method as recited in claim 37, wherein the electrical energy generator is provides a driving energy.

Claim 39 (new): The method as recited in claim 37, wherein the electrical energy generator is an auxiliary power unit.